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ART PRIZES.

"THERE was a prize offered or rather two prizes, a large and a small one, for the greatest speed; not in a single race, but to such who had raced the whole year."

"I took the first prize" said the Hare, "one had a right to expect justice, when one's own family and best friends were in the council; but that the Snail should have got the second prize, I consider as almost an insult to me."

"No" observed the Fence-rail, who had been a witness to the distribution of the prizes, "you must take diligence and good-will into consideration. The Snail to be sure took half a year to cross the threshold, but he broke his thigh-bone in the haste he made. He devoted himself entirely to this race, and moreover he ran with his house on his back, and so he took the second prize."

"I think my claims might have been taken into account," said the swallow, "more speedy than I in flight and motion I believe no one has shown himself. And where have I not been? Far, far away." "And that is your misfortune," said the Fence-rail, "you gad about too much. You are always on the wing."

"I can declare upon my honor that each prize—at least as far as my voice in the matter went, was awarded with strict justice," said the Sign-post in the wood. My plan was to give the first prize to one of the first letters in the alphabet, and the second prize to one of the last letters. If you will be so good as to grant me your attention, I will explain to you. The eighth letter in the alphabet from A is H; that stands for Hare, and therefore I awarded the greatest prize to the Hare, and the eighth letter from the end is S, therefore the Snail obtained the second prize. Every thing should be done by rule and rules must not be broken through."

"I should certainly have voted for myself had I not been among the judges," said the Ass. "There is one thing which must never be disregarded, it is the beautiful. I saw that in the Hare's charming, well-grown ears, it is quite a pleasure to see how long they are. I fancied that I beheld myself when I was little and so I voted for him. I must say I expect great things from the future—we have made so good a beginning."

The above is one of Hans Anderson's charming fables which describes most humorously but most accurately the distribution of prizes in nearly all contests. Most especially is it true of prize giving for art work. The Hare got it because he had friends in the council, and the Ass voted for him because they both had long ears. The Sign-post had a pre-arranged rule for awarding the prizes, and one may be sure that all the other judges were influenced by many reasons besides the merit of the case. The Swallow was the genius who undoubtedly deserved the prize, but then he was eccentric, and probably should have had all the prizes and so got none.

The question arises "is it possible for any jury to award any prizes for art work with entire justice?" Can any men put aside their prejudices, their personal feelings, their likes and dislikes, their rules and systems long enough to be fairly just. It seems doubtful.

If we look back over the awards of juries in this country it is hard to find one which can commend itself to an intelligent observer. The award of a medal to be voted for by all the contestants, or by a large jury selected by the contestants, would seem to be the only plan likely to produce good results. No artist of ability cares to have such a council sit upon him as sat upon the Swallow.

ACADEMICIAN.

THE NEW ORLEANS EXHIBITION.

NOTHING definite has been heard in regard to the Art Department of the World's Fair, to be held in New Orleans. An extra number of the *Times Democrat* has been received, which devotes eight full pages to the different departments of the exhibition, the mineral, the agricultural, educational and industrial features of which are discussed at length, but not one word is said about the Art Department; however, among the illustrations of the buildings already erected and to be built, is one of the art building—but whether this has gone further than the design, remains to be ascertained. Three or four months ago we learned that negotiations were to be opened with the American Art Union, for a collection of pictures of the members, but nothing further has been heard.

It may be that the directors intend to confine their art exhibit to the local art of the South, and to photographs and art manufactures.

There has hitherto been so little interest shown for Art by the Southern people, that it will be difficult if not impossible for them to obtain a good collection, unless some guarantee is given for a fair percentage of sales, according to the plan inaugurated last year by the Art Union, which has given such satisfaction to all concerned.

JAMES L. CLAGHORN.

THE death of James L. Claghorn, the well-known banker of Philadelphia, and an honorary member of the ART UNION, which was announced on August 27th, removes one of the best friends of art in America, and one of the most active supporters of the Pennsylvania Academy. It is not overstating the case to say that the institution just named, of which he was for a number of years the president, owes its present comparative financial prosperity mainly to his exertions. He was greatly interested, also, in the Philadelphia School of Design for Women, and occupied the position of presiding officer of its Board of Directors at the time of his death. As a collector he was principally interested in engravings and etchings, of which he had probably the largest and finest selection in the United States. It is to be hoped that this collection may be kept together as the most fitting monument to his memory. The deceased left his property, valued at over \$100,000, to his widow and son, with the proviso that, if the executors can, without encroaching too much on the estate, give to the Academy any presents in the shape of paintings, engravings, or books it would be only carrying out the intention which the testator himself would have declared more fully, had not the estate been encroached upon by shrinkage and other causes.